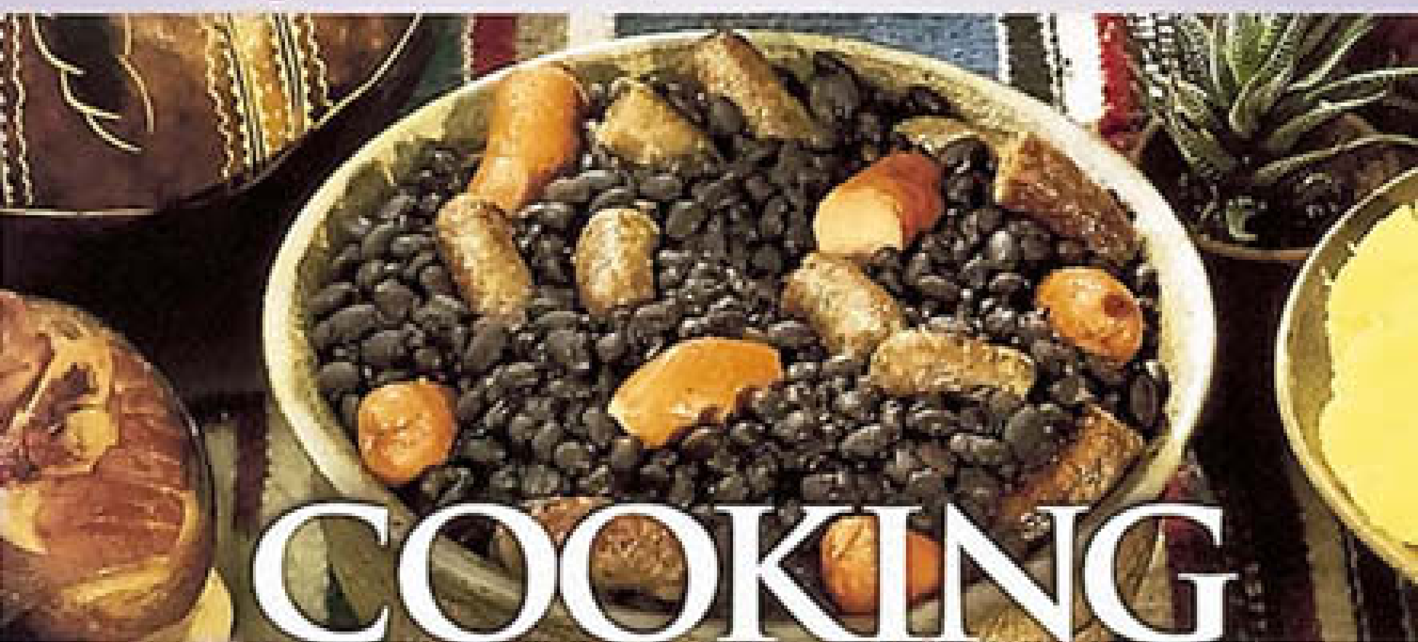
easy menu ethnic cookbooks



COOKING THE SOUTH AMERICAN WAY

revised and expanded to include new low-fat and vegetarian recipes



HELGA PARNELL

COOKING THE SOUTH AMERICAN WAY

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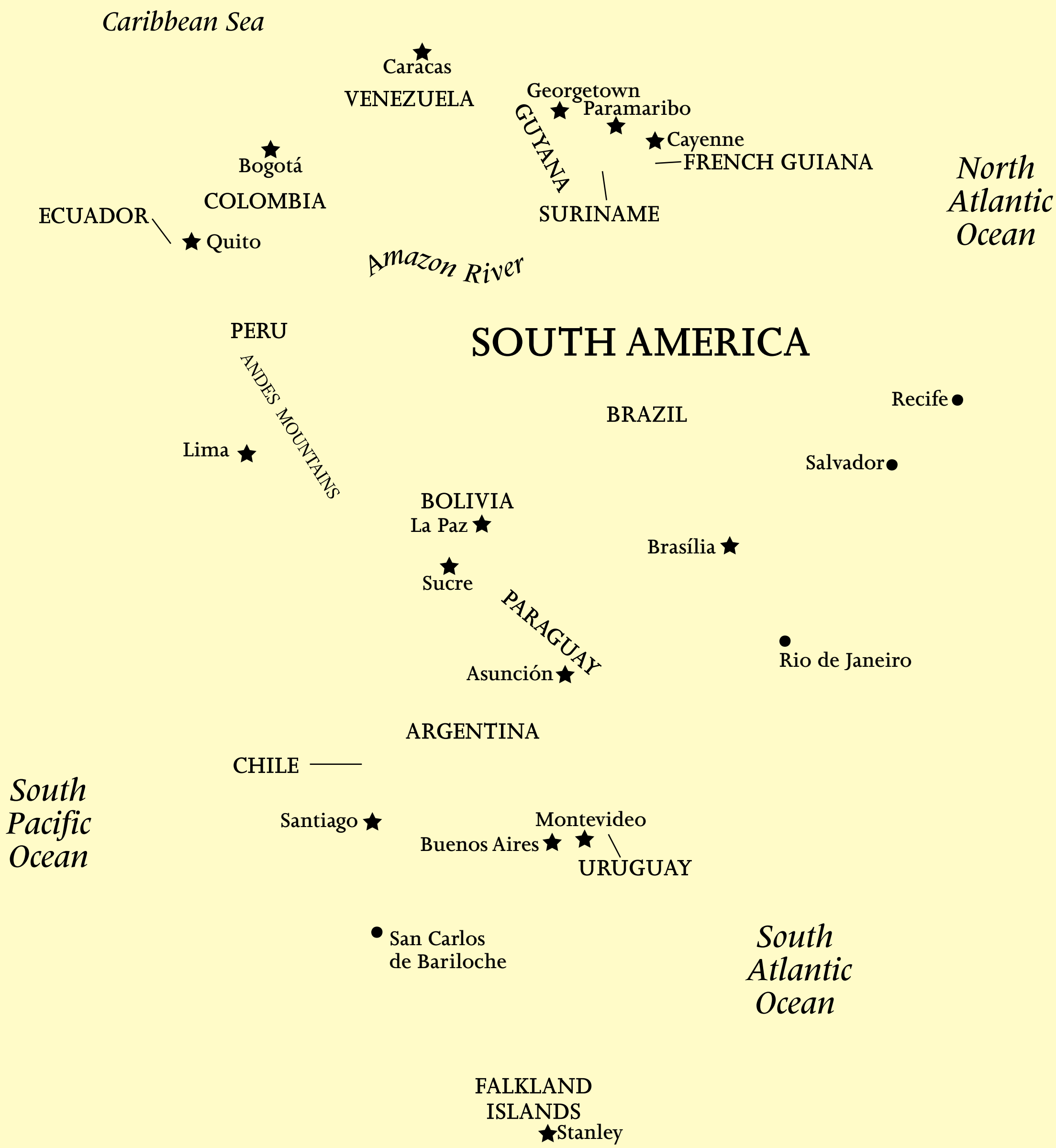


Introduction

If you were to create a meal featuring a dish from each country in South America, you'd be savoring some of the best food in the world. The variety of spices, tropical fruits and vegetables, and international influences in South American cooking makes it difficult to label as one cuisine. Each region offers its own special foods to the mix.

In the northern countries, such as Venezuela and Colombia, the cuisine is strongly influenced by the Spanish colonists who settled this area in the late 1500s. Fresh citrus juices, olive oil, wine vinegar, oregano, and cumin flavor the seafood for which these coastal countries are well known. In mountainous Ecuador, Bolivia, and Peru, potatoes, which grow in abundance in the area's rich soil, and a nutritious grain called quinoa play prominent roles in the cuisine. Peru is famous for its spicy food, seasoned with the hot *aji amarillo,* a yellow chili pepper. In Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay, cattle abound. Regional specialties almost always include beef, and barbecued meat is popular. Brazilian cuisine is especially delicious, featuring exotic tropical fruits and vegetables, fresh seafood, and *dende,* a palm oil introduced by African slaves long ago. The recipes provided in this book include a sampling of dishes from throughout South America. With such a variety to choose from, there's no doubt you'll find something to your liking.

Turnovers are popular in several countries in South America. They can be filled with beef, chicken, or fruit. (Recipe on pages 62–63.)



The Land and Its People

South America, the fourth largest continent in the world, is composed of twelve independent countries plus the Falkland Islands and

French Guiana. The continent has three main land regions: the Andes Mountains, the Central Plains, and the Eastern Highlands. In western South America, the Andes Mountains, the world's longest mountain range, stretch almost the entire length of the continent. Rain forests (*selvas*), deserts, hardwood forests, and grassy plains (*pampas*) cover other areas of the continent. Dramatic waterfalls, enormous lakes, and rocky islands are also part of the South American landscape. And water almost totally surrounds the continent—the Caribbean Sea to the north, the Atlantic Ocean to the east, the Drake Passage to the south, and the Pacific Ocean to the west.

Because most of South America lies in the Southern Hemisphere (south of the equator), the seasons are opposite those of countries

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in the Northern Hemisphere. Winter begins in June and generally ends in September, and summer lasts from December to March.

Although most of the land in South America could be used for agriculture, only about one-third is actually farmed. Argentina and Brazil have some of the largest farms in the world—including a few that are bigger than some countries. The large farms produce valuable exports such as bananas, coffee, grains (wheat, barley, and rye), soybeans, sugarcane, beef, and wool. Other agricultural exports include grapes, citrus fruits, corn, cacao, potatoes, and cotton. Most South American farms, however, are small, and the majority of farmers struggle to provide enough food for their families.

The people of South America are as varied as the landscape. Native Americans had lived on the continent for thousands of years before the Spanish and Portuguese arrived in the 1500s. The Spanish conquered the Native Americans and gradually took over most of South America, except for Brazil, which was ruled by Portugal. As a result, Spanish is the official language of most of South America. Exceptions include Brazil, where Portuguese is the official language; Peru and Bolivia, where Native American languages share official language status with Spanish; Suriname, where Dutch is the official language; and Guyana, where English is the official language. (Most people in Suriname and Guyana speak Creolese, however. Creolese is a common dialect based on several local languages.) English is spoken in two South American countries: Argentina and Guyana. The British gained a strong foothold in South America during the Napoleonic War of 1806, when troops landed in Argentina. Although the British were never able to claim the country as their own, many British settlers moved to Argentina during the 1800s. These days, more than 500,000 people of British descent call Argentina home. Guyana was the Colony of British Guiana from 1831 until the country gained independence in 1966.

Over the years, many Europeans have settled in South America, often marrying Native Americans. Their descendants, of mixed ancestry, are called *mestizos*. In most South American countries, very few

Native Americans of unmixed ancestry still exist. In Brazil, for example, Native Americans make up less than 1 percent of the population. Only Peru and Bolivia have large Native American populations. Throughout most of South America, Native Americans live primarily in remote regions, much as their early ancestors did. Black people arrived on the continent in the 1600s, when European settlers brought them from Africa to work as slaves on large plantations.

Almost all South American countries have a rather rigid class system based on ancestry, wealth, or a combination of both. Throughout South America, there is a small upper class, a growing middle class, and a very large lower class. Bolivia and Venezuela are the only exceptions to this rule. In Bolivia, mestizos belong to all classes. Venezuela also has an open society, and people there are not segregated on the basis or race or class.

Most South Americans live in cities that have skyscrapers and look much like the cities of North America. The upper and middle classes usually live in modern apartment buildings or private homes. The urban poor, however, live in crowded slums. Opportunities for education and economic development vary from country to country.

Regional Cooking

As you would expect, foods that are plentiful in a country or region play a large part in the area's cuisine. Argentina, for example, is cattle country. Argentines love a good *asado* (barbecue). Most Argentine people eat beef at all three meals and prefer it to lamb, fish, or chicken. Italian immigrants introduced spaghetti, lasagna, and other pastas to both the Argentine and the Uruguayan diet. And the British immigrants introduced teatime—a custom that is popular in Argentina and in several other South American countries. It is a time when people pause during a busy day to enjoy a cup of tea and a snack.

A beef soup called *puchero,* made with meat and vegetables, is a favorite meal in Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, and Bolivia. *Empanadas*

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(pastries stuffed with meat, seafood, eggs, vegetables, or fruit) are popular in Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, and Brazil. They are often sold along the roadside. In Uruguay *parrillada criolla* (a mixture of barbecued sausages, kidneys, and strips of beef) is well liked.

Native Americans in Peru are believed to have been the first people to cultivate the potato, which grew wild in the highlands. Potatoes were an important part of the Peruvian diet long before they were known anywhere else. In modern Peru, the upper and middle classes enjoy a varied diet of meat, fish, poultry, vegetables, and cereal products. Most Peruvians prefer food that is highly seasoned with onions and hot peppers. Rice, potatoes, and bread are also served at meals.

Foods in both Colombia and Venezuela retain a heavy Spanish influence. Cooks use citrus juices, olive oil, wine, and the region's plentiful seafood to create delicious fare. In Colombia diets vary from region to region, but they generally consist of starchy foods

such as potatoes, rice, and noodles. Stews and thick soups are popular, as is *agua de panela,* a drink made of brown sugar and water. Colombia is also a leading producer of coffee.

Traditional Venezuelan food includes black beans, plantains (a type of banana), and rice, which is usually eaten with beef, pork, poultry, or fish. *Arepa,* a round cornmeal cake, is the traditional bread. Spanish *paella,* a rice dish seasoned with saffron and made with seafood and vegetables, is quite popular there.

Potatoes, corn, and quinoa are among the traditional foods of Bolivia. *Humitas* (made with fresh corn) and *saltenas* (meat turnovers) are also common.

Ecuadorans generally like fried foods, and *coladas* (thick meat or vegetable soups) are enjoyed in both Ecuador and Chile. *Cazuela de ave,* a meat and vegetable dish, is popular in Chile, but the Chilean diet is based primarily on bread, beans, and potatoes. Coffee and tea, especially an herb tea called *aguita,* are popular beverages in Chile.

The cuisine in Suriname and Guyana is a reflection of the many ethnic groups that have settled there. In Guyana, English roast beef, puddings, and tea appear with Indian curries, Chinese noodles, and Portuguese garlic pork. The people of Suriname are also fond of a variety of foods, most of which are highly spiced. The national dish is a thick pea soup made with sausages and potatoes.

Holidays and Festivals

When Spanish and Portuguese explorers and colonists came to South America in the late 1500s, they introduced Native Americans to the Roman Catholic religion. In modern times, the vast majority of South Americans practice Catholicism. The continent's most celebrated holidays and festivals honor important Catholic events and patron saints.

Carnival is one of the most popular festivals of all. This nonstop party is the last chance to have fun before Lent, the forty-day season of fasting that precedes Easter. Four days before Ash Wednesday,

the holy day that marks the beginning of the Lenten season, South Americans in Brazil, Peru, and Uruguay close schools and offices to dance in the streets. In Brazil, where the festival is world-famous, people dance the samba, the *frevo,* and the *lambada*. Merrymakers dress in elaborate, colorful costumes and parade through the city streets of Rio de Janeiro, Salvador, and Recife. Months in advance, South Americans build fancy floats for Carnival parades. In Montevideo, Uruguayan neighborhoods perform plays, called *tabladas,* on street corners. Neighbors build sets, make costumes, and perform the play. In Peru, Carnival is thought to be the best time to meet your future husband or wife.

Food and drink are a big part of the Carnival celebrations. The name "carnival" comes from *carne vale,* which means "farewell to meat" in Latin. Barbecued meats and other celebratory meat treats, such as empanadas, are very popular.

While some Catholics are celebrating Carnival, others are spending this time thinking about the past year. The three days before Ash Wednesday are called Shrovetide. Some Catholics observe these days by going to confession and asking forgiveness for their sins. In Guyana, Portuguese Catholics traditionally eat *malassados,* corn pancakes, on Shrove Tuesday.

La Pasqua, or Easter, ends the Lenten season. The Christian holiday celebrates Jesus Christ's resurrection from the dead. In many South American countries, including Paraguay and Venezuela, everyone has the week off from work and school to celebrate Holy Week (the week before Easter). On Easter Sunday, South Americans dress up in their finest clothes and go to Mass. Afterward, people celebrate with a big holiday feast. In Paraguay, communities sponsor plays about Judas, the disciple who betrayed Jesus Christ. After the performance, celebrants use straw to create life-sized effigies (stuffed replicas) of Judas and march with them around town. They hold a mock trial in which Judas is tried and convicted of a crime against Jesus. Eventually, they hang or burn the effigy to symbolize their devotion to Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church.

Instead of Holy Week, Uruguayans celebrate the history of their country during Semana Criolla, or Tourism Week. Most of the events honor the gaucho, or South American cowboy, a symbol of the nation's independent spirit. Men dress up like gauchos, wearing wide-brimmed hats, ponchos, and baggy pants tucked into low boots. The modern-day gauchos perform in rodeos, amazing spectators with their superior horse handling and cattle-roping techniques. Afterward festivalgoers enjoy a big feast, consisting of parillada (grilled meats), *mazamorra* (ground corn with milk), and *maté,* the traditional South American tea.

Throughout South America, rodeos are a celebration in themselves. In Chile, people travel for miles to marvel at a gaucho's showmanship. Rodeo cowboys do not ride bucking broncos nor do they try to rope runaway cattle. Instead, they perform a series of maneuvers, such as galloping sideways across the ring, to demonstrate their

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control over the horse. A big celebration, including lots of eating, drinking, and dancing, follows the rodeo. Empanadas, black beans, and *pastel de choclo,* a meat and onion pie, are typical fare. After dinner, women armed with white handkerchiefs pair up with men to dance *la cueca,* the national dance. Rumor has it that the dance imitates a rooster stalking a hen.

Christmas is a big celebration throughout the continent. In Venezuela Christmas festivities begin on December 16. Many Venezuelans attend Mass each day, where they sing *aguinaldos*—Christmas folk songs. In Brazil, Chile, Venezuela, and other South American countries, families spend Christmas Eve attending parties and going to midnight Mass. After church Brazilian families gather in the sitting room to light the Christmas tree. Everyone snacks on cookies and opens presents before going to bed. The big Christmas Day feast is served at lunchtime, when Venezuelans indulge in *hallacas,* the traditional Christmastime treat. These cornflour tamales are filled with pork, chicken, olives, and spices.

The traditional Christmas dish in Brazil is *mariscada de bacalhau,* salted codfish stew, which may be served with heart of palm soup, *banana fritas* (fried bananas), and *dolces*—fruits sweetened with sugar and cooked down to a heavy sauce. In Chile, where families begin the Christmas season by setting up a nativity scene in mid-December, the center of the holiday feast is lobster. Some families go to restaurants to eat *curanto,* a dish made by digging a deep pit in the sand, lining it with corn husks or banana leaves, and filling it with herbs, spices, eggs, vegetables, seafood, and a variety of meats. Hot stones placed on top of the food do the cooking. Chileans also enjoy *pan de Pasque,* a Christmas bread made with dried fruits and spices, while opening presents on Christmas Day. A similar bread, called *pan dulce,* is a traditional Christmas treat in Argentina.

Twelve days later, on January 6, South Americans celebrate Epiphany, or Three Kings Day. This holiday honors the day the three kings brought gifts to the baby Jesus. Argentine children leave their shoes outside, in hopes that the kings will leave a few treats for them,

too. In Paraguay, Epiphany has become more of a secular holiday. People might spend the day attending bullfights or going to festivals. A popular holiday treat is *sopa Paraguaya,* a cornbread made with onions and cheese. Uruguayans of African descent hold a dance celebration known as *candombé* on Epiphany. In Montevideo, celebrants parade through the streets, dancing and playing music.

Festivals honoring patron saints occur throughout the continent at all times of the year. High in the Andes Mountains, the Aymara people, native to Chile, Peru, and Bolivia, honor the Virgin Mary on July 16 with La Fiesta de la Virgen de la Tirana. Festivities blend Catholic traditions with the ancestral rituals of the Aymara people, who are related to the Incas, a Native American people. More than sixty thousand tourists crowd this tiny town to hear the music, watch the dancers, eat, and pray. Foods featured at the festival, such as *ensalada de quinoa,* showcase the corn, potatoes, and quinoa that thrive in the region.

Other South American festivals mark the change in seasons. Both Uruguay and Argentina end the summer with a sea festival, called Fiesta del Mar in Uruguay and Mar del Plata in Argentina. This event takes place in March or April on local beaches. Festivalgoers participate in sporting events and watch a parade of decorated boats. At the end of the festival, the queen of the sea is crowned and people gather around a bonfire on the beach. In Uruguay, fireworks light up the night sky. Seafood, such as mussels, shrimp, and saltwater fish, are favorite foods.

In July, when winter is in full swing, Argentines in the mountain town of San Carlos de Bariloche celebrate with a snow festival. Downhill ski competitions, music, and a torchlight parade draw people from near and far. The delicious chocolate, for which the little town is well known, tempts many a festival attendee.

No matter what the occasion, South Americans celebrate with delicious food made from the freshest ingredients available. In the South American tradition, invite some friends and family over and prepare your own festive meal using the recipes provided in the Holiday and Festival Food section of this book.



Before You Begin

Cooking any dish, plain or fancy, is easier and more fun if you are familiar with its ingredients. The international dishes in this book make use of some ingredients you may not know. You should also be familiar with the special terms that will be used in these recipes. Therefore, before you start cooking, study the following "dictionary" of cooking utensils, terms, and special ingredients very carefully. Then read through the recipe you want to try from beginning to end.

Now you are ready to shop for ingredients and to organize the cookware you will need. Once you have assembled everything, you can begin to cook. It is also very important to read "The Careful Cook" on page 20 before you start. Following these rules will make your cooking experience safe, fun, and easy.

Salted codfish stew (bottom) *from Brazil and Paraguayan corn bread* (top) *are delicious holiday recipes. (Recipes on pages 66–67 and 68–69.)*

The Careful Cook

Whenever you cook, there are certain safety rules you must always keep in mind. Even experienced cooks follow these rules when they are in the kitchen.

- Always wash your hands before handling food. Thoroughly wash all raw vegetables and fruits to remove dirt, chemicals, and insecticides. Wash uncooked poultry, fish, and meat under cold water.
- Use a cutting board when cutting up vegetables and fruits. Don't cut them up in your hand! And be sure to cut in a direction *away* from you and your fingers.
- Long hair or loose clothing can easily catch fire if brought near the burners of a stove. If you have long hair, tie it back before you start cooking.
- Turn all pot handles toward the back of the stove so that you will not catch your sleeves or jewelry on them. This is especially important when younger brothers and sisters are around. They could easily knock off a pot and get burned.
- Always use a pot holder to steady hot pots or to take pans out of the oven. Don't use a wet cloth on a hot pan because the steam it produces could burn you.
- Lift the lid of a steaming pot with the opening away from you so that you will not get burned.
- If you get burned, hold the burn under cold running water. Do not put grease or butter on it. Cold water helps to take the heat out, but grease or butter will only keep it in.
- If grease or cooking oil catches fire, throw baking soda or salt at the bottom of the flame to put it out. (Water will *not* put out a grease fire.) Call for help, and try to turn all the stove burners to "off."

Cooking Utensils

colander—A bowl with holes in the bottom and sides. It is used for draining liquid from a solid food.

Dutch oven—A heavy pot with a tight-fitting domed lid that is often used for cooking soups or stews

rolling pin—A cylindrical tool used for rolling out dough

slotted spoon—A spoon with small openings in its bowl. It is used to pick solid food out of a liquid.

stock pot—A large pot in which stock, or broth, is prepared as a base for soup

Cooking Terms

beat—To stir rapidly in a circular motion

blanch—To scald, steam, or boil briefly in water

blend—To combine thoroughly, or mix, two or more ingredients

boil—To heat a liquid over high heat until bubbles form and rise rapidly to the surface

brown—To cook food quickly over high heat so that the surface browns evenly

cream—To beat two or more ingredients until the mixture is smooth

dice—To chop food into small, square pieces

fold—To blend an ingredient with other ingredients by using a gentle, overturning circular motion instead of by stirring or beating

grate—To cut into tiny pieces by rubbing food against a grater

ladle—To dip into and serve foods, especially such liquids as soups, gravies, and sauces, with a long-handled, deep-bowled spoon

marinate—To soak food in a seasoned liquid in order to add flavor and to tenderize it

mince—To chop food into very small pieces

preheat—To allow an oven to warm up to a certain temperature before putting food in it

puree—To make a paste or thick liquid from finely ground food

sauté—To fry quickly in oil or fat, over high heat, stirring or turning the food to prevent burning

sift—To mix several dry ingredients together or to remove lumps in dry ingredients by putting them through a sieve or sifter

simmer—To cook over low heat in liquid kept just below its boiling point. Bubbles may occasionally rise to the surface.

steam—To cook food with the steam from boiling water

stir-fry—To quickly cook bite-sized pieces of food in a small amount of oil over high heat

Special Ingredients

anise—The spice made from the seeds of anise, an herb that grows in the Mediterranean region. Its flavor is similar to black licorice.

avocado—The pulpy green or purple fruit of various tropical trees of the laurel family

basil—A rich, fragrant herb whose fresh or dried leaves are used in cooking

bay leaf—The dried leaf of the bay (also called laurel) tree. It is used to season food.

bouillon—A mixture of spices, seasoning, and powdered meat used to make broth and to add flavor to other foods

chives—A member of the onion family. The thin green stalks are chopped and used as flavoring and as a garnish.

cilantro—The leaves of coriander, a sharp-flavored herb used as a seasoning and as a garnish

cloves—The dried flower buds of an evergreen tree that are used to season food

cumin—The seeds of an herb used whole or ground to give food a pungent, slightly hot flavor

fennel—A plant with stiff, stalky stems similar to celery that produces seeds used to flavor foods. The plant's stalks may be used in soups and salads.

ground round—Very lean ground beef

kale—A hardy, curled-leaf cabbage that does not form a dense head

leek—An edible plant, related to the onion, that has a white bulb and long, dark green leaves

lemon extract—A liquid made from lemons that is used to flavor foods

mace—An aromatic spice made from the fibrous covering of a nutmeg

olive oil—An oil made from pressed olives. It is used in cooking and for salad dressings.

paprika—A red seasoning made from the ground, dried pods of the capsicum pepper plant

parsnip—A white root vegetable that looks like a carrot and tastes like parsley

quinoa—A highly nutritious pearl-like grain used in soups and salads

Spanish fresh cheese (queso fresco)—A salty white cheese that crumbles like Greek feta or blue cheese, commonly used in Latin American cooking

white wine vinegar—A vinegar made from white wine

wonton wrappers—Thin pastry skins used in Asian cooking

zest—The very outer peel of citrus fruits such as lemons, limes, or oranges

Healthy and Low-Fat Cooking Tips

Many modern cooks are concerned about preparing healthy, low-fat meals. Fortunately, there are simple ways to reduce the fat content of most dishes. Here are a few general tips for adapting the recipes in this book. Throughout the book, you'll also find specific suggestions for individual recipes—and don't worry, they'll still taste delicious!

Many recipes call for butter or oil to sauté vegetables or other ingredients. Using oil lowers saturated fat, but you can also reduce the amount of oil you use. You can also substitute a low-fat or nonfat cooking spray for oil. Sprinkling a little salt on the vegetables brings out their natural juices, so less oil is needed. Use a nonstick frying pan if you decide to use less oil than the recipe calls for.

Another common substitute for butter is margarine. Before making this substitution, consider the recipe. If it is a dessert, it's often best to use butter. Margarine may noticeably change the taste or consistency of the food.

Dairy products can be a source of unwanted fat. Feel free to replace heavy cream with half-and-half, and sweetened condensed milk with fat-free evaporated milk. Many cheeses are available in reduced- or nonfat varieties. Or simply use less cheese in the recipe. To avoid losing flavor, you might try using a stronger-tasting cheese.

Meat is an essential part of many South American meals. Some cooks like to replace ground beef with ground turkey or chunks of tofu or chicken to lower fat. However, since this does change the flavor, you may need to experiment a little bit to decide if you like these substitutions. Buying extra-lean ground beef is also an easy way to reduce fat.

There are many ways to prepare meals that are good for you and still taste great. As you become a more experienced cook, try experimenting with recipes and substitutions to find the methods that work best for you.

METRIC CONVERSIONS

Cooks in the United States measure both liquid and solid ingredients using standard containers based on the 8-ounce cup and the tablespoon. These measurements are based on volume, while the metric system of measurement is based on both weight (for solids) and volume (for liquids). To convert from U.S. fluid tablespoons, ounces, quarts, and so forth to metric liters is a straightforward conversion, using the chart below. However, since solids have different weights—one cup of rice does not weigh the same as one cup of grated cheese, for example—many cooks who use the metric system have kitchen scales to weigh different ingredients. The chart below will give you a good starting point for basic conversions to the metric system.

MASS (weight)

1 ounce (oz.)	=	28.0 grams (g)
8 ounces	=	227.0 grams
1 pound (lb.) or 16 ounces	=	0.45 kilograms (kg)
2.2 pounds	=	1.0 kilogram

LIQUID VOLUME

1 teaspoon (tsp.)	=	5.0 milliliters (ml)
1 tablespoon (tbsp.)	=	15.0 milliliters
1 fluid ounce (oz.)	=	30.0 milliliters
1 cup (c.)	=	240 milliliters
1 pint (pt.)	=	480 milliliters
1 quart (qt.)	=	0.95 liters (l)
1 gallon (gal.)	=	3.80 liters

LENGTH

¼ inch (in.)	=	0.6 centimeters (cm)
½ inch	=	1.25 centimeters
1 inch	=	2.5 centimeters

TEMPERATURE

212°F	=	100°C (boiling point of water)
225°F	=	110°C
250°F	=	120°C
275°F	=	135°C
300°F	=	150°C
325°F	=	160°C
350°F	=	180°C
375°F	=	190°C
400°F	=	200°C

(To convert temperature in Fahrenheit to Celsius, subtract 32 and multiply by .56)

PAN SIZES

8-inch cake pan	=	20 x 4-centimeter cake pan
9-inch cake pan	=	23 x 3.5-centimeter cake pan
11 x 7-inch baking pan	=	28 x 18-centimeter baking pan
13 x 9-inch baking pan	=	32.5 x 23-centimeter baking pan
9 x 5-inch loaf pan	=	23 x 13-centimeter loaf pan
2-quart casserole	=	2-liter casserole

A South American Table

South Americans gather at the table for the main meal of the day between 1 and 3 P.M. The typical table is covered with a fine tablecloth and set quite formally, as you might expect a table to be set for a special occasion in North America or Europe. This meal usually includes soup or salad, a main meat course, side dishes, and dessert.

Table manners are taken very seriously in South America. At holiday dinners in Chile, it is considered rude to eat anything with the hands. Chileans are expected to eat a little of everything on their plate, even if they don't like it. In Brazil, good table manners are of the utmost importance. Traditionally, Brazilian diners also use a fork and knife to eat everything, including a sandwich or a piece of fruit. If visitors stop by when a Brazilian family is having dinner, they will be expected to stay and eat something. It is considered rude to say no.

South Americans join together to share a meal with several courses, from soups and salads to main dishes and desserts.

A South American Menu

Below are two menus for a South American meal—one meat based, the other vegetarian. Use the shopping lists provided to gather the ingredients you will need to assemble the feast. Enjoy!

MENU 1

Marinated chicken

Turnovers with beef filling

Kale

Petits fours

SHOPPING LIST:

Produce

2 onions
1 green bell pepper
1 head garlic
celery
1 lemon
1 head kale

Dairy/Egg/Meat

¼ lb. ground round
½ dozen eggs
butter
6 pieces chicken (thighs and drumsticks)

Canned/Bottled/Boxed

1 box raisins
1 jar green olives
5-oz. can tomato paste
hot sauce
cornstarch
olive oil
white wine vinegar

Miscellaneous

salt
pepper
cumin
paprika
2 bay leaves
1 package (36) wonton wrappers
cooking spray
mace
allspice
granulated white sugar
powdered sugar
lemon extract
flour
baking powder

MENU 2

Beans with vegetables

Sautéed white rice

Milk pudding

SHOPPING LIST:

Produce

2 onions
4 garlic cloves
1 zucchini

Dairy/Egg

1 pint whole milk
½ dozen eggs

Canned/Bottled/Boxed

long-grain white rice
4 15-oz. cans navy beans
2 9-oz. cans stewed tomatoes
1 14-oz. can sweetened
condensed milk

Miscellaneous

salt
pepper
paprika
oregano
1 whole clove
1 package frozen corn
vegetable oil
sugar



Soups and Salads

In South American countries, soups and salads are typically served at the start of a meal, as a way to whet the appetite. Soup and stew ingredients will vary depending on where you dine on the continent. In the southern countries, including Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay, beef is readily available. Puchero, an Argentinian beef soup, combines beef with vegetables such as carrots, potatoes, and celery in a tasty broth. In some nations that border the sea—Brazil, Colombia, Chile, and Venezuela—cooks simmer soups featuring the catch of the day, such as Chilean sea bass or salt cod. The latter is the main ingredient in the Brazilian favorite, mariscada de bacalhau, included in the Holiday and Festival Food section of this book.

Salads are popular throughout South America, both as starters and as refreshing main courses on sweltering days. With such an abundance of fresh fruits and vegetables, many salads served in South America are particularly exotic.

Chicken rice soup (bottom) *or beef stew* (top) *are wonderful appetizers to begin a meal. (Recipes on pages 32 and 33.)*

Chicken Rice Soup/*Canja com Arroz* (Brazil)

Broth:

4 skinless, boneless chicken breasts, cut into pieces

2 celery stalks with leaves, cut in 4 pieces each

1 carrot, peeled and quartered

1 onion, peeled and quartered

stem from 1 sprig of parsley

2 tsp. salt

¼ tsp. pepper

8 c. water

Soup:

2 celery stalks, diced

2 carrots, peeled and diced

1 medium parsnip, peeled and diced

1 tomato, chopped

⅓ c. cooked rice

¼ tsp. basil

¼ c. chopped parsley or chives for garnish

1. Place the chicken, celery stalks, carrot, onion, salt, pepper, and water in large saucepan or stockpot and bring to a boil.
2. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 1½ hours.
3. Using a colander, strain broth into a bowl. Set chicken pieces aside and discard cooked vegetables.
4. Return liquid and chicken to pot, and add the diced celery, diced carrots, parsnip, tomato, rice, and basil.
5. Cover and simmer for 20 minutes.
6. Serve hot, garnished with chopped parsley or chives.

Preparation time: 30 minutes
Cooking time: 2 hours
Serves 4 to 6

Beef Stew/Guiso de Vacuno (Peru)

3 tbsp. vegetable oil*

2 medium onions, chopped

1½ lb. round steak, cubed

2 tsp. paprika

1 tsp. cumin

1 tsp. garlic powder

¼ tsp. red pepper flakes

1 tsp. salt

¼ c. white wine vinegar

2 c. beef bouillon

2 c. squash, peeled and cut into ½-inch pieces**

1 c. frozen peas

1 c. frozen corn

3 sprigs parsley

1. Heat oil in a pan and sauté onions.
2. Add meat and brown well, about 20 minutes.
3. Add all spices, salt, vinegar, and beef bouillon. Bring to a boil, stirring to mix well.
4. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 20 minutes.
5. Add squash, cover, and simmer for another 20 minutes.
6. Add peas and corn and heat thoroughly.
7. Garnish with parsley and serve.

Preparation time: 30 minutes
Cooking time: 1¼ hours
Serves 6

**To reduce the fat content of this recipe, use 2 tbsp. oil and sprinkle a little salt on the onions to bring out their natural juices. Cook in a nonstick pan.*

***For ease of preparation, select a squash, such as butternut, without ridges. Use a vegetable peeler to peel the squash. Then chop it in half lengthwise and scoop out the seeds. Chop flesh of squash into pieces.*

Uruguayan Bean Salad (Uruguay)

3 c. canned fava or kidney beans, drained and rinsed

1 large tomato, chopped and seeded*

¾ c. chopped onion

¼ c. fresh Italian parsley, chopped

3 tbsp. red wine vinegar

2 tbsp. olive oil

1 tsp. oregano

½ tsp. crushed red pepper

½ tsp. black pepper

¼ tsp. salt

1. Combine all of the ingredients in a bowl and toss. Serve chilled.

Preparation time: 20 minutes
Serves 6

***To seed a tomato, cut the tomato in half and use a paring knife to cut out the seeds.**



Seafood Salad/*Ensalada de Mariscos* (Chile)

4 medium tomatoes

¼ c. mayonnaise*

¼ c. sour cream*

1 tbsp. lemon juice

½ tsp. salt

¼ tsp. pepper

½ lb. fresh shrimp or crabmeat

12 lettuce leaves

1 avocado, peeled and sliced**

4 sprigs parsley or cilantro

16 to 20 black olives

1. Carefully scrape out the pulpy centers of the tomatoes and set aside.

2. Mix mayonnaise, sour cream, lemon juice, salt, pepper, and pulp of tomatoes.

3. Add shrimp or crab and mix well.

4. Fill the tomatoes with the seafood mixture.

5. Arrange three lettuce leaves on each of four plates. Place a filled tomato in the center of each plate and garnish with avocado slices, parsley or cilantro, and olives.

Preparation time: 25 minutes
Serves 4

**To reduce the fat content of this dish, substitute nonfat plain yogurt for the mayonnaise, sour cream, or both. If you choose to replace the mayonnaise, add a tablespoon of Dijon mustard for flavor.*

***To prepare the avocado, use a knife to cut it in half lengthwise. Twist the two halves in opposite directions to split the avocado in half. Use a spoon to remove the pit. Then scrape the fruit from the peel, place on a cutting board, and cut into strips.*

Salad Platter/ *Ensalada de Legumbres (Chile)*

4 carrots, blanched* and sliced

2 c. green beans, blanched and ends trimmed

2 red peppers, seeded and sliced in strips

1 small zucchini, sliced

1 small cucumber, sliced

4 to 5 mushrooms, sliced

2 to 3 cherry tomatoes

2 small potatoes, peeled, cooked, and sliced

3 to 6 celery stalks, sliced in strips

6 to 8 asparagus spears, blanched

1. Arrange vegetables on a platter

2. Pour dressing over them evenly. (See recipe below.)

Preparation time: 15 minutes
Serves 4

** To blanch vegetables, bring a pot of water to a boil and carefully add the vegetables. Boil for a minute or two and drain. Rinse the vegetables in cool water.*

Dressing/ *Alino (Chile)*

½ c. olive oil

2 tbsp. lemon juice

1 large clove garlic, minced

½ tsp. salt

¼ tsp. pepper

1. Combine all ingredients in a small jar.

2. Cover tightly and shake well.

Preparation time: 10 minutes
Makes about ½ cup



Main Dishes

South American cuisine has a reputation for being heavy on beef, usually cooked over a fire. Although beef is a prominent part of meals in some countries, such as Argentina, fish and seafood dishes are popular in countries such as Venezuela, Colombia, and Brazil that have seacoasts. As poultry becomes more readily available, poultry dishes, such as *pollo en escabeche,* a Chilean entrée, have become more popular. Vegetarians take heart. *Porotos granados,* the national dish of Chile, features beans, zucchini, and tomatoes. Or, omit the pork hock and sausage links from *feijoada,* a Brazilian black bean casserole, and season it instead with chopped onions, cumin, and fresh lime juice and serve with rice.

Breaded beef cutlets (bottom) *and black bean casserole* (top) *are filling main dishes.* *(Recipes on pages 40 and 41.)*

Breaded Beef Cutlets/Milanesas (Argentina)

Beef, which is plentiful in Argentina, is the favorite meat of most Argentine people. These appetizing cutlets appear on most restaurant menus and in home cooking, served with potatoes or rice and a vegetable or salad.

¾ c. bread crumbs

¾ tsp. oregano

¼ c. flour

½ tsp. salt

¼ tsp. pepper

1 lb. beef (eye of the round), cut into 8 slices

1 egg, beaten

oil for frying

4 lemon wedges

1. Mix bread crumbs and oregano. Set aside.
2. Mix flour, salt, and pepper.
3. Coat beef slices with flour mixture. Dip them in the beaten egg, then roll in the bread crumbs, coating well.
4. Heat oil in large skillet, then add beef slices.
5. Cook over medium heat 4 to 5 minutes on each side, or until browned.
6. Garnish with lemon wedges before serving.

Preparation time: 30 minutes
Cooking time: 10 to 15 minutes
Serves 4

Black Bean Casserole/*Feijoada (Brazil)*

Feijoada, the national dish of Brazil, is a complicated dish that usually takes days to prepare. Feijoada can be varied by adding different kinds of meat, such as smoked beef tongue, smoked pork ribs, or other cuts of pork. Feijoada is a heavy meal usually reserved for festive occasions. It is often followed by a nap. This is a simplified version of the original Brazilian specialty.

2 c. canned black beans

4 c. water

1 ham bone or pork hock*

1 c. chopped onion

1 tsp. salt

½ tsp. pepper

1tsp. cumin

2 tbsp. lime juice

8 pork sausage links or hot dogs**

1. Drain beans and put in a pan. Add 4 c. water, ham bone or pork hock, onion, salt, pepper, cumin, and lime juice.
2. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat, cover, and simmer over low heat for 3 hours.
3. Brown pork links, cut in bite-sized pieces, and add to the bean mixture. If using hot dogs, cut them into bite-sized pieces and add directly to the bean mixture. Heat thoroughly. Serve with rice.

Preparation time: 10 minutes
Cooking time: 3½ hours
Serves 6 to 8

**To make this a vegetarian dish, omit the ham bone or pork hock and pork sausage links or hot dogs. Add 1 cup chopped onion, reduce cooking time to ½ hour, and serve with rice.*

***To lower the fat content of this dish, use turkey sausage in place of the pork links. Tofu hot dogs can replace regular hot dogs.*

Marinated Chicken/*Pollo en Escabeche* (Chile)

6 pieces chicken* (thighs and drumsticks)

salt and pepper to taste

1 tbsp. vegetable oil

1 large onion, sliced

1 stalk celery, chopped

¾ c. white wine vinegar

½ c. water

½ lemon, sliced in a half-moon shape, leaving the peel on

2 bay leaves

½ tsp. mace

¼ tsp. allspice

1. Wash chicken thoroughly and pat dry with paper towels.

2. Sprinkle chicken with salt and pepper.

3. Heat oil in a large frying pan. Add chicken and brown on all sides.

4. Add all other ingredients and stir to mix.

5. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 30 minutes.

6. Transfer chicken to a bowl and skim fat off top of liquid remaining in frying pan.

7. Return chicken to pan, cover, and refrigerate overnight. Serve cold.

Preparation time: 15 minutes
Cooking time: 45 minutes
Refrigeration time: overnight
Serves 4

**After handling raw chicken or other poultry, always remember to thoroughly wash your hands, utensils, and preparation area with soapy hot water. Also, when checking chicken for doneness, it's a good idea to cut it open gently to make sure that the meat is white (not pink) all the way through.*





Beans with Vegetables/*Porotos Granados (Chile)*

Porotos granados, the national dish of Chile, is traditionally made with dried cranberry beans, called porotos. For this recipe, use canned navy beans, a staple item that is much easier to find than cranberry beans.

2 tbsp. vegetable oil

1 c. finely chopped onion

3 cloves garlic, minced

1 tbsp. paprika

1 tsp. oregano

1 c. zucchini, peeled and chopped

4 c. canned navy beans (strain liquid and save)

1½ c. water, more or less as needed

1½ c. canned stewed tomatoes

1 c. frozen corn

salt and pepper to taste

1. In a Dutch oven, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Add the onion, garlic, paprika, and oregano. Mix well and fry for about 3 minutes.

2. Add zucchini and beans and mix well.

3. Add enough water to the reserved bean liquid to make 2 cups. Add liquid to the Dutch oven, stir, and bring to a boil.

4. Reduce heat to simmer and add the tomatoes, corn, salt, and pepper. Cook uncovered for about 30 minutes, reducing the liquid but not allowing the stew to dry out. Serve as a main dish or as a side item with meat, poultry, or fish.

Preparation time: 15 minutes
Cooking time: 45 minutes
Serves 6



Side Dishes

The purpose of a side dish is to complement and enhance the main course. Typically, side dishes feature starchy foods with a relatively mild flavor, such as potatoes, rice, or plantains. South American cooks carefully select side items that will not compete with or overpower the taste of the fish, chicken, or beef main entrée.

South American side dishes are not limited to starches and hot vegetables, however. For variety, a salad may be served with the main course. Turn to the Soups and Salads section of this book for creative side dish ideas. To make a satisfying vegetarian meal, mix and match three or four of these side dishes or salads.

Sautéed white rice (center), *peas* (bottom), *and kale* (top) *make colorful complements to any South American entrée. (Recipes on pages 48 and 49.)*

Sautéed White Rice/Arroz Brasileiro (Brazil)

3 tbsp. olive oil

1 small onion, chopped

1 garlic clove, chopped

2 c. uncooked long-grain white rice, rinsed

1 whole clove

5 c. hot water

salt and pepper to taste

1. In a medium saucepan, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic and sauté about 5 minutes, or until the onion is translucent.

2. Add the rinsed rice and stir constantly until the rice has absorbed the oil and the grains are translucent (about 8 minutes).

3. Add the clove and hot water. Bring to a boil over high heat.

4. Reduce heat to a simmer and add salt and pepper. Cover and cook 20 minutes, or until the rice is tender.

5. Remove from heat and let stand for 5 minutes until the rice has absorbed all of the moisture.

Preparation time: 15 minutes
Cooking time: 40 minutes
Serves 6

Peas/*Guisantes* (Argentina)

1 tbsp. butter or margarine, melted

1 10-oz. package frozen peas

4 eggs*

**Cholesterol-conscious cooks may wish to replace the eggs with egg substitute.*

1. Melt butter in frying pan and sauté peas over medium heat for 5 minutes.
2. Carefully crack eggs on top of peas. Cover and steam until eggs are cooked, about 5 minutes.
3. Gently transfer to serving dish or directly onto individual plates.

Preparation time: 10 minutes
Cooking time: 10 minutes
Serves 4

Kale/*Couve* (Brazil)

1 head kale

2 tbsp. olive or vegetable oil

2 cloves garlic

1. Wash kale thoroughly. Place each kale leaf on a cutting board and use a paring knife to remove the leaf rib—the stem that forms the leaf's spine. Slice along each side of the rib to remove it. Pat dry with paper towel.
2. Roll up each leaf and slice into thin strips.
3. Heat oil in a medium saucepan, add garlic, and sauté.
4. Add kale and stir-fry until tender but not soft, about 3 to 4 minutes.

Preparation time: 10 minutes
Cooking time: 10 minutes
Serves 4

Corn Packages/Humitas (Chile, Bolivia, Ecuador)

6 ears corn with husks

1 medium onion, minced

1½ tsp. salt

1 tbsp. basil

¾ tsp. paprika

1 tbsp. oil

2 tbsp. sugar (optional)

1. Carefully remove corn husks, rinse well, and set aside in water.

2. With a knife, carefully remove kernels from cob by cutting down the cob and away from you.

3. Using a blender or food processor, puree corn kernels until smooth.

4. Mix onion with salt, basil, and paprika and stir-fry in hot oil for about 3 minutes. Add the corn paste and sugar and mix well.

5. Arrange four to six corn husks in a star pattern so the wide ends overlap in the center. Repeat until you have six "packages."

6. Place 2 tbsp. of the corn mix in the middle of each husk package.

7. Fold the two long sides in and over the corn mixture, then fold the two ends toward the center so the corn mixture is covered. Tie each corn package securely with string.

8. Place humitas in a large saucepan of boiling water. Reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes.

9. Remove from water, drain, unwrap, and serve warm.

Preparation time: 15 minutes
Cooking time: 30 minutes
Serves 4





Teatime and Desserts/ Merienda y Postres

During colonial times, the British introduced teatime to Argentina and Guyana. Many people still observe this relaxing custom, pausing in the late afternoon to enjoy a cup of tea and a light snack. These snacks tend to be sweets, such as tiny cakes, cookies, or candies. Brazilian nut cake and milk pudding, or flan—a recipe introduced by the Spanish—have become popular teatime treats as well.

But teatime snacks don't necessarily have to be sweet. Finger sandwiches, for example, are more like an appetizer than a dessert, providing a healthy pick-me-up before dinner. For fun, make a few of these treats and host your own teatime on a Saturday afternoon. Invite friends over around 3 P.M. to enjoy the fruits of your labor.

Petits fours (bottom) *and milk pudding* (top) *are sweet, baked treats that are sure to please. (Recipes on pages 54 and 55.)*

Petits Fours/*Masas Finas* (Argentina)

Cake:

1 c. flour

1½ tsp. baking powder

¼ c. cornstarch

⅛ tsp. salt

3 eggs

1 c. sugar

¼ tsp. lemon extract or zest of ½ lemon*

5 tbsp. water

Frosting:

3 c. powdered sugar

¾ tsp. lemon extract

3 tbsp. melted butter

3 to 4 tbsp. hot water

**If you do not have a lemon zester, use a cheese grater to grate only the top yellow layer from the lemon peel.*

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly grease a 9-inch-square baking pan.
2. Sift together flour, baking powder, cornstarch, and salt. Set aside.
3. Beat eggs until light and creamy. Add sugar to eggs, ¼ c. at a time, beating well after each addition.
4. Add lemon and water to egg mixture and beat well. Then fold in the flour mixture, a little at a time.
5. Pour batter into pan and bake for 25 to 30 minutes until lightly browned. When a toothpick inserted into the center of the cake comes out clean, the cake is done.
6. Remove cake from pan and cool on wire rack. When cool, slice into 16 squares.
7. In a small bowl, beat all frosting ingredients until creamy.
8. Spread frosting evenly on top and sides of cooled cake squares.

Preparation time: 30 minutes
Cooking time: 25 to 30 minutes
Serves 10

Milk Pudding (Flan)/Dulce de Leche/ Pudim de Leite (Brazil, Argentina)

4 eggs

1 14-oz. can sweetened condensed milk

½ c. whole milk

⅓ c. sugar

1. With a hand mixer or in a blender, beat eggs.
2. Add condensed and whole milk and blend well. Set custard mixture aside.
3. Heat sugar over medium-high heat in a small saucepan, stirring constantly, until the sugar carmelizes (turns brown and syrupy). This may take 20 minutes.
4. Quickly pour sugar mixture into bottom of ovenproof 2-quart mold or bowl, coating the bottom and sides of container.
5. Pour custard mixture into the mold.
6. Bake at 350°F for 45 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
7. Chill until ready to serve. Turn onto platter. The pudding will be covered with a caramel sauce.

Preparation time: 20 minutes
Cooking time: 1 hour
Serves 6

Finger Sandwiches/*Bocaditos* (Argentina)

These tiny tidbits can be as much fun to make as they are to eat. You can garnish them with almost anything you like, so use your imagination.

12 thin slices French bread

1 3-oz. container whipped cream cheese with chives*

½ cucumber, thinly sliced

4 to 6 precooked shrimp

4 cherry tomatoes

4 pimento-stuffed olives, sliced

1. Trim crusts from bread.
2. Spread a thin layer of cream cheese on bread.
3. Garnish with cucumber slices, shrimp, cherry tomatoes, and/or olives.

Preparation time: 30 minutes
Serves 6

**To reduce the fat content of this dish, use reduced-fat cream cheese.*





Holiday and Festival Food

As you may expect, food plays a major role in holiday and festival celebrations in South America. South American cooks make holiday gatherings special by preparing foods reserved for special occasions. In Paraguay, for example, where meat is expensive, beef is usually grilled for Independence Day or Christmas dinner. Some holiday dishes take as long as a week to prepare, and cooking is part of the celebration. Family and friends work together, chopping vegetables, stirring stews and soups, or baking sweet treats.

The recipes included in this section are usually prepared to celebrate a particular South American holiday or festival. Don't let this stop you from making these dishes any day of the year. After all, cooking and baking foods that are new to you is often a festive experience in itself.

Christmas fruit cake from Chile is a colorful and delicious dessert that can be served at Christmas or anytime. (Recipe on pages 60–61.)

Christmas Fruit Cake/*Pan de Pasque* (Chile)

This sweet, cakelike bread, made with raisins, dried fruit, and nuts, is a popular treat at Christmastime in Chile. Argentines indulge in a similar bread called pan dulce.

3 c. plus 2 tbsp. all-purpose flour

1½ tsp. baking powder

pinch of salt

1 tsp. anise

1 tsp. cinnamon

¼ tsp. cloves

1½ sticks butter, at room temperature

½ c. packed dark brown sugar

⅓ c. sugar

5 large eggs

1 c. milk

1 c. mixed candied fruits

½ c. chopped walnuts

½ c. chopped almonds

1 c. raisins

1 tsp. orange zest

2 tsp. powdered sugar

1. Preheat the oven to 300°F. Butter a 9-inch cake pan and line it with two layers of wax paper. Butter the top layer of wax paper.
2. In a large bowl, combine 3 c. flour, baking powder, salt, and spices.
3. In another large bowl, beat the butter, brown sugar, and sugar until light and fluffy. Add 4 eggs, one at a time, and beat after each addition.
4. Use a wooden spoon to add a small amount of the flour mixture to the sugar mixture. Stir to combine. Now add a small amount of the milk and stir to combine. Continue adding batches of the flour mixture and milk to make a smooth, thick batter. Stir vigorously a few times to lighten the batter.
5. Place the candied fruits, nuts, raisins, and orange zest in a small bowl and sprinkle with the remaining 2 tbsp. flour. Shake to coat, and stir the fruits and nuts into the batter.

6. Pour the batter into the cake pan. Bake for 45 minutes.
7. Remove the cake from the oven. In a small bowl, beat the remaining egg with a fork. Use a pastry brush to apply the beaten egg to the top of the cake and dust with powdered sugar.
8. Return the cake to the oven and bake for 2 more hours, or until a knife inserted in the center of the cake comes out clean. If the cake starts to brown too quickly, cover it with foil.
9. Cool the cake in the pan, then turn it out onto a plate. Remove the wax paper. Store cake in a paper bag in the refrigerator for one day before slicing. The cake will keep for two to three weeks if stored in the refrigerator.

Preparation time: 15 minutes
Cooking time: about 2¾ hours
Makes 1 9-inch cake

Turnovers/*Empanadas* (Brazil, Argentina, Ecuador, Chile)

Empanadas are a popular treat all over South America, and are served on special days such as Christmas and Easter. By changing the pastry size and the filling, this versatile recipe can be used as a main dish, an appetizer, or a dessert. (For the chicken and fruit fillings, mix the ingredients in a bowl and follow directions for assembly in Steps 8–9. Bake as directed.)

Beef Filling/*Relleno de Carne Picada:*

¼ lb. ground round*

3 tbsp. onion, chopped

3 tbsp. green bell pepper, chopped

1 garlic clove, minced

3 tbsp. raisins, chopped

½ tsp. ground cumin

½ tsp. paprika

¼ tsp. salt

¼ tsp. pepper

10 green olives, sliced

1 tbsp. tomato paste

½ tsp. hot sauce

1 tbsp. cornstarch

1 tbsp. water

36 wonton wrappers

cooking spray

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F.

2. Over medium-high heat, sauté the ground round in a small, nonstick skillet, stirring often, until browned.

3. Drain the grease from the pan.

4. Add the onion, bell pepper, and garlic and cook for 5 minutes, stirring often.

5. Remove from heat. Stir in the raisins, spices, salt and pepper, green olives, tomato paste, and hot sauce.

6. Place two clean cookie sheets in the oven for about 10 minutes.

7. Combine the cornstarch and the water in a small bowl.

8. Place the first wonton wrapper on a clean surface in front of you. (While working with each wonton wrapper, cover the others with a damp kitchen towel to prevent

Chicken Filling/*Relleno de Pollo:*

2 c. cooked chicken, minced*

1 c. cream cheese with chives

2 tbsp. minced parsley

Fruit Filling/*Relleno de Fruitas:*

2 c. chopped apples

2 tbsp. sugar

2 tsp. cinnamon

**To make a vegetarian empanada, substitute meatless soy burgers or chopped, sautéed potatoes for the ground beef or chicken.*

them from drying out.) Spoon 1 tbsp. of the beef mixture (or chicken or fruit) onto the center of the wrapper.

9. Moisten the edges of the wrapper with the cornstarch mixture and bring two opposite corners together to form a triangle. Pinch the edges to seal the wonton closed. Place the filled wrapper on a clean plate. Repeat with the remaining filling, wrappers, and cornstarch mixture.
10. Remove the baking sheets from the oven and spray with cooking spray. Place the empanadas in a single layer on the baking sheets.
11. Bake for 8 minutes, or until golden brown, turning once.

Preparation time: 45 minutes
Cooking time: 30 minutes
Makes 36 empanadas
Serves 12

Chilean Quinoa Salad/*Ensalada de Quinoa (Chile)*

The Aymara Indians, who make their home in Chile's Andes Mountains, celebrate patron saint days, mixing Catholic and indigenous traditions. La Fiesta de la Virgen de la Tirana, held on July 16, is the most popular celebration in the region. Ensalada de quinoa is often served during these festivities.

1½ c. quinoa, rinsed in a strainer until the water runs clear

3 c. water

salt to taste

2 tomatoes, peeled, seeded, and diced*

1 red bell pepper, diced

1 c. finely chopped onion

2 jalapeño peppers, seeded and minced

½ c. minced fresh cilantro

¼ c. lemon juice

½ c. olive oil

1. Place the quinoa and 3 c. water in a medium saucepan and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat, cover, and simmer for 12 to 15 minutes, or until translucent. Drain and let cool. Transfer to a large bowl and fluff with a fork.

2. Add the vegetables, cilantro, lemon juice, and oil. Stir to combine.

3. Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes before serving.

Preparation time: 30 minutes
Cooking time: 20 minutes
Cooling time: 30 minutes
Serves 4

****To peel a tomato, place it in a small saucepan of boiling water for about 1 minute. Remove with a slotted spoon and cool until the tomato is warm but no longer hot. Use a small paring knife to peel off the skin. To seed a tomato, cut the peeled tomato in half and use a paring knife to cut out the seeds.***



Salted Codfish Stew/*Mariscada de Bacalhau* (Brazil)

You'll find this dish on nearly every Brazilian dinner table at Christmastime. Although it is traditionally made with salted codfish, this recipe calls for regular cod, as it is more readily available.

6 medium potatoes, peeled

4 tbsp. olive oil

1 large onion, chopped

3 garlic cloves, minced

1 yellow bell pepper, seeded and cut into thin strips

1 red bell pepper, seeded and cut into thin strips

1 small hot chili pepper, seeded and cut into thin strips

3 medium leeks, cleaned and chopped

3 carrots, chopped

2 medium fennel bulbs, sliced (save tops)

1 16-oz. can whole tomatoes

½ c. pitted green olives, chopped

1 tbsp. fresh thyme, chopped

4 c. unsalted fish stock

2 tbsp. white cider vinegar

2½ lb. cod, cut into cubes

¼ c. chopped fresh parsley

1. Place the potatoes and enough water to cover them in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil over high heat and cook until the potatoes are almost tender (about 15 minutes).

2. Drain and cool the potatoes and slice into ½-inch rounds.

3. In a Dutch oven, heat 2 tbsp. olive oil over medium heat. Sauté the onions and the garlic for 5 minutes, or until the onions are translucent. Spoon the mixture into a small bowl.

4. Add the remaining olive oil to the Dutch oven and sauté the yellow and red peppers for about 5 minutes, or until slightly limp. Using a slotted spoon, add the peppers to the onion mixture.

5. Sauté the chili pepper in the Dutch oven for about 5 minutes, adding more olive oil as needed.

6. Put the onion and yellow peppers back into the Dutch oven. Also add the potatoes, leeks, carrots, fennel, tomatoes, olives, thyme, stock, and white cider vinegar. Bring to a boil and then reduce the heat, simmering for 10 minutes. The vegetables should be almost tender.

7. Add the cod and parsley and cook for another 10 minutes. Garnish with the wispy fennel tops.

Preparation time: 30 minutes
Cooking time: 1 hour
Serves 6

Paraguayan Corn Bread/*Sopa Paraguaya* (Paraguay)

Sopa Paraguaya, Paraguay's national dish, is typically served on Independence Day (May 15) or during religious or family celebrations. It is enjoyed by itself or with meat or poultry.

cooking spray

2 tbsp. grated fresh parmesan cheese

1 tbsp. butter

1 tbsp. vegetable oil

1 c. chopped onion

⅓ c. chopped green pepper

2 c. frozen corn

½ c. low-fat cottage cheese

1½ c. yellow cornmeal

¾ c. shredded Muenster cheese

½ c. skim milk

1 tsp. salt

½ tsp. black pepper

4 large egg whites

½ tsp. cream of tartar

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F. Coat a 9-inch round cake pan with cooking spray. Sprinkle with parmesan cheese and set aside.
2. Heat the butter and the vegetable oil in a skillet over medium heat. Sauté the onion and green pepper until soft. Place the onion mixture in a blender or food processor and blend until smooth.
3. Add 1½ cups corn and the cottage cheese and blend until almost smooth. Scrape the mixture into a large bowl.
4. Stir in the rest of the corn, cornmeal, Muenster cheese, milk, salt, and black pepper.
5. In a separate bowl, beat the egg whites and cream of tartar until stiff peaks form.
6. Gently fold half of the egg whites into the batter. Then fold in the other half.
7. Spoon the batter into the prepared pan.

8. Bake for 30 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center of the corn bread comes out clean.

9. Cool for 10 minutes and then place a plate over the pan. Turn the bread onto the plate and cut into wedges.

Preparation time: 30 minutes
Cooking time: 45 minutes
Serves 8

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About the Author

Helga Parnell moved from Germany to the United States in 1963. She managed a catering and food service business in St. Paul, Minnesota, for many years. In developing the recipes for this book, she worked with Zila Oliveira of Brazil, Stella Piazza-Ercole of Argentina, and Guillermo Moreno of Chile. Besides cooking, Parnell enjoys music, swimming, and cross-country skiing. She lives with her husband in Mendota Heights, Minnesota.

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